



Working for the people and communities of the 32nd District

Rep. Maralyn Chase

Letter to the 32nd District:

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Dear Neighbors,

The 2003 Legislative Session was a challenge as we struggled to preserve critical state programs. In the end we were not always able to do so due to tight constraints on new revenues. Nonetheless, House democrats worked hard to ensure that Washington remains a great place to live and work, while delivering solutions for a 21st century economy.

Turning towards the upcoming 2004 session, my goal is to be fair and effective for all our citizens, especially our students, vulnerable individuals, our community businesses and our workers. Once again we will be considering hot button economic development issues like Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and tax deferments/incentives such as B&O credits and Research & Development exemptions.

The ever-growing crisis in our Health Care system is affecting families who are losing coverage, businesses that are dealing with higher premiums, and state government which is finding it more and more difficult to keep up with skyrocketing costs. Fortunately, the price of prescription drugs will soon decrease for many of our most vulnerable citizens in our state due to legislation championed by House Democrats last session. We remain committed to making health care more affordable for all who live in our state.

Environmental protection will be another big issue before the 2004 Legislature including sustainable forest use, green building, and the Energy Standards Portfolio which mandates more efficient energy use and an increase in renewable energy sources. This not only protects the environment but also helps wean us off of foreign oil and energy sources. I also believe that there are greater economic and employment opportunities awaiting us in new environmental technologies than those of traditional energy sources. I want to see Washington at the forefront of these 21st century opportunities.

I will also be paying careful attention to balancing the needs of our increasingly international business community with the needs of our community businesses — those businesses that will not "dislocate" because of their roots in our communities. I am mindful of the citizens who comprise our local workforce, especially unemployed workers who have done everything expected from responsible citizens and who are striving to provide for themselves and their families. I'm aware that many have become unemployed due to companies relocating to other countries and the economic downturn across our country and believe that we need to do everything we can to assist them in their search for new work.

These and other issues such as L&I reform, charter schools, and the future of Fircrest will also be given careful consideration. I welcome your thoughts and ideas about the issues I am raising with this newsletter. I believe we must do all we can to insure that the legislation we adopt promotes social, economic and environmental justice and economic prosperity. It is my distinct honor to serve as your representative in the State Legislature. I welcome your comments and look forward to our district-wide dialogue on these important matters.

Sincerely,

Rep. Maralyn Chase



Rate-payers as a revenue resource

When we talk about using public sources of money to subsidize private ventures, we must be cautious in authorizing infrastructure projects that can saddle us, our children, and our grandchildren with debt service on bonds. A good example is the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS), famous for defaulting on 2.25 billion dollars of bonds for its cancelled nuclear power plants.

Among the lessons we learned from 1981 and WPPSS is the role of the residential consumers (and taxpayers) when used as a revenue source to guarantee profits for major private industries and private utilities. In this circumstance, residential customers were asked to support construction costs of power plants mostly for the region's aluminum industry. Since then, the aluminum industry has left the state, but the rate payers are still paying for WPPSS. As a result, these bonds will finally be retired in 2018 by my grandchildren.

A key assumption for WPPSS was that human progress was related to material progress. A delay in building power generation was seen as giving up on progress. Today, the key assumption is that human progress is found on the path of building knowledge-based economies such as nano-science, infomatics, photonics, and genomics with the state (taxpayers) providing infrastructure needed by these businesses.

Knowledge-based Economy's Competitive Advantage

Today's mantra: Innovate or Die....nations and regions that have followed the path of building knowledge-based economies have become prosperous and powerful. Those that did not — have not. The knowledge-based economy is rapidly changing and requires high levels of education and skills, continuous knowledge upgrading and high levels of information technology in homes, schools and workplaces. Innovation based upon knowledge brings prosperity.

60 percent of new jobs in the early 21st century will require skills possessed today by only 20 percent of the present workforce. Add to that the harsh reality that one-third of the young people entering our high schools

in Washington do not graduate. Of the two-thirds who do, only one-third of those go to college.

For continued economic development we must redouble our efforts to educate the undereducated workforce in our state. In the 21st century knowledge-based economy, an area's competitive advantage will depend on the quality of its workforce development system...its education system.

Learn more about Washington's Strategy for the Innovation Economy at <http://www.governor.wa.gov/innovation/index.htm>

Tax Increment Financing/ TIF

Given these times of scarce financial resources, I believe that the public has the "right to know" how its tax dollars are being spent and how not collecting taxes from certain groups affects our ability to fund vital public services for our children, the elderly, working families, and the poor.

TIF or EDGE financing are economic tools that are designed to give certain geographic areas an economic jumpstart by leveraging infrastructure development. Since this tool deprives the taxing district of an immediate revenue stream with the hopes that in the future a larger tax base will be built up to draw from, various protections have to be built in to protect the public:

1. Public review and comment
2. Explicit statement of the public good anticipated from the projects
3. Impact on existing businesses in the area but not in the TIF district
4. Anti-displacement protections
5. Protection of revenues for local schools
6. Explicit statement of effect on all junior taxing districts and state general fund
7. Public evaluation and measurement of the TIF; were the goals met

I encourage you to follow the debates as TIF, the R&D tax incentives, and the B&O tax credits could have a profound effect on state revenues as well as your own taxes.

What we need is an open and fair process through which the community can fully participate in the economic decision-making that impacts their community

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and the quality of services available to them. The community, not a sub-set of developers, ought to be able to decide what they want their community to look like.



INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY:

Building a sound infrastructure today ensures a healthy community later. The function of both the Capital Budget and Public Works Board is to allocate money for infrastructure projects around the state, such as schools, parks, and other construction projects, creating family-wage jobs for our citizens in the process. This year, we passed a \$2.57 billion budget into law to create more than 13,000 private-sector family-wage jobs across Washington State and build vital facilities at state colleges and universities.

I am happy to report that the Capital Budget includes the following funding for the 32nd District:

- § \$300,000 for the Woodway Wildlife Reserve
- § \$1,581,773 for the Shoreline Interurban Trail Crossing
- § \$2,000,000 for Fircrest Improvements

The '03 capital budget also provides for \$80 million to tackle the problem of low-income housing statewide. This money will go towards provide housing for farm workers and the homeless. It will also provide transitional housing and shelters for survivors of domestic violence. I am very pleased that these critical social services were given this support and am proud of the work of our Capital Budget Committee.

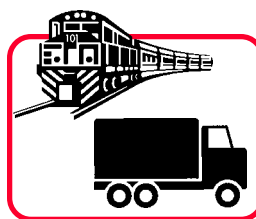
The Transportation Package passed last year recognized the need for relief along State Route 99 through Aurora. I am pleased that \$10 million was allocated for this project to the City of Shoreline, and will work hard to make sure this funding is utilized in the best possible way.

I am also pleased that the Public Works Board, which funds bridges, roads, domestic water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and solid waste (includes recycling) has recommended allocating the following money for sewer extensions in our district:

- § \$1,101,211 for sewer extension near Kenmore Junior High

- § \$316,566 for sewer extension in Lake Forest Park
- § \$234,124 for sewer extension at West Hill

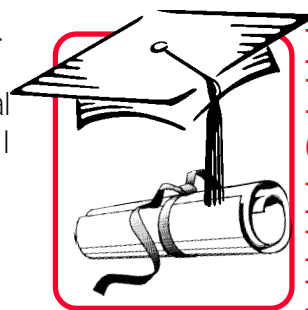
All of these allocations recognize the fact that if we want to keep and attract the workers and workplaces shaping the 21st Century economy, than we must continue to make smart investments like these in our community.



TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Both dislocated manufacturing workers and dislocated community businesses will find more advocacy in state government with the State's developing focus **on growing and protecting local businesses as a source of jobs and prosperity for our communities.**

The Committee held meetings across the state, including our district, to listen to the concerns of small, community oriented businesses. As a result, we are proposing a Community Business Center which will serve as a gateway for small, community businesses to access state procurement and increase governmental purchase of Washington products. Buy Washington First!



HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE – NEW MASTER PLAN FOR HIGHER ED

To read the report, visit:

<http://www.hecb.wa.gov/Docs/packets/03October/HECBDraft-10-30-2003.pdf>

The Legislature is crafting a new master plan for higher education in the State of Washington. There are a number of important goals and strategies in the draft plan which we believe deserve statewide attention and discussion. Please come to our community outreach meeting Thursday, December 11, 6:30 – 8:30 pm at my District Office in the Shoreline Center, to discuss this new plan and any other legislative issues that interest you!

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Union-Friendly vs. "Right to Work" States

I believe the notion of "right-to-work" only brings about reduced business taxes and regulation, lower wages, fewer benefits, more privatization and weaker unions. It is a race to the bottom for our civilization and I will not accept that vision for my grandchildren. I have not seen evidence that a right-to-work scenario will bring a better life for our people. I want everyone to think about what kind of society shall we leave for our grandchildren? The issues we face today are nothing less than the long-term impact on them.

Rolling back the clock to a previous time when workers were not allowed the protections, fair wages and benefits they deserve is not what I call progress. I am steadfast in my belief that we can reconcile the differences between the needs of the business community with the needs of working families, but only when both voices have an equal voice at the negotiating table. And that's what labor unions provide.

LET'S TALK!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETINGS 2ND Thursdays

You're invited to join me and discuss your concerns. I want to hear directly from you.

When: 6:30 to 8:30 pm, the 2nd Thursday of each month @
DISTRICT OFFICE @ SHORELINE CENTER - 206-366-2604

Directions are on the web at:

<http://www.shorelinecenter.com/index.php?page=directions>

FIRCREST: A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Fircrest is nationally recognized as a center of excellence: one of the top 10 institutions of its kind in the U.S. It sets the "standard of care" for our vulnerable disabled citizens whether in community group homes or in the institution. Studies have shown it is more cost-effective to care for these most vulnerable among us in the institutions. Additionally, when DD clients are moved off the State Budget, they appear on other budgets, such as our police departments or hospital emergency rooms, which amount to no more than a "cost-shift" to local budgets rather than genuine savings to the tax payers.

Fircrest is an important public asset that provides services to our citizens, 750 jobs to our workers and is an important partner of the University of Washington medical school. Moreover, Fircrest is the only institution of its kind in the Central Puget Sound Corridor. It is a grave error to close such a valuable source of comfort for our citizens, and employment and medical research for our community.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AND WASSAIL - DECEMBER 18, 2003

We'll be having a Holiday Open House and Wassail Thursday, December 18, 2003 from 5-8 pm. @ District Office. We'll provide light refreshments, please come and join us for holiday cheer!

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